

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

State FY19 / Federal FY18 Homelessness Solutions Program (HSP) Application Guidance

Applications Due:
May 15, 2018
3:00 PM

The Homelessness Solutions Program (HSP) consolidates six (6) different Federal and State funding sources, in order to make funding available to Continuums of Care for the purpose of preventing, reducing and ending homelessness within their jurisdictions.

Final awards are dependent upon available funds appropriated by Congress and the Maryland General Assembly.



Larry Hogan
GOVERNOR

Boyd K. Rutherford
LT. GOVERNOR



Kenneth C. Holt
SECRETARY

Overview

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Division of Neighborhood Revitalization, administers the Homelessness Solutions Program (HSP). HSP brings together six different funding sources in order to provide one consolidated stream of funding for local Continuums of Care to address homelessness. HSP is intended to serve as an emergency response for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, and secondarily to connect with Continuum of Care (CoC) programs for clients in need of longer-term interventions.

The Department estimates that approximately \$9,343,491 will be available in State and Federal funding, dependent on funds appropriated by Congress and the Maryland General Assembly.

HSP funds are made available in order to assist households experiencing homelessness to be connected with emergency shelter, quickly regain stability in permanent housing and to prevent households from becoming homeless. Priority is given to programs that are offering low-barrier shelter and that are moving high-needs clients into permanent housing, using a Housing First approach. The goals of the program include efforts to:

- Provide shelter as a crisis response for people experiencing homelessness;
- Reduce the number of individuals/households who become homeless;
- Shorten the length of time an individual or household is homeless;
- Reduce the number of individuals/households that return to homelessness; and
- Provide fixed or short-term rental assistance payments to people at risk of being homeless.

Expected Funding Availability for State Fiscal Year 2019 (Federal Fiscal Year 2018) (subject to legislative approval)

Name	Source	Amount
Emergency Solutions Grant (FFY2018)	Federal - HUD	\$1,000,797
State HSP Funds (SFY2019)	Maryland	\$8,342,694
	TOTAL	\$9,343,491

Funds will be allocated annually, with each annual grant administered over a 15-month grant period (**July 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019**). The funding may support efforts to: (1) rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families; (2) engage unsheltered homeless individuals and families; (3) provide emergency shelter for homeless individuals and families, including operations and essential services for residents; (4) prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless; and (5) track information about services provided through a Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) database.

Grantee Eligibility

Funds are available to eligible Continuums of Care (CoCs) within the State of Maryland.

Grantees must comply with program guidelines and applicable state and federal policies and procedures, including compliance with federal and state non-discrimination laws.

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Application Deadline and Format

Applications are due to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development by **3:00 p.m. on May 15, 2018. Applicants must submit both:**

- 1)** An electronic copy of the application, sent to homeless.grants@maryland.gov
- 2)** One (1) unstapled hard copy should be delivered in a binder to:

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Attn: Homelessness Solutions
7800 Harkins Road
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Both the hard copy and electronic applications should match exactly. Failure to submit both applications by the deadline may result in reductions in funding awarded, including non-funding.

APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be the Lead Agency, or Collaborative Applicant, of a Continuum of Care (CoC).

Eligible Activities

HSP provides funding for four main activities, which together provide a crisis response for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness:

- 1) **Housing Stabilization Services.** Housing Stabilization Services are designed to help people locate, pay for, and remain in permanent housing. Eligible costs include rental assistance, financial assistance, and case management. Housing Stabilization Services are also separated by the type of client being served: **Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)** covers services to individuals and households that are “literally homeless,” meeting the HUD category 1 definition of homelessness. **Homelessness Prevention (HP)** is for households who do not meet the category 1 criteria, but are still considered at-risk of homelessness. DHCD prioritizes Rapid Re-Housing as an intervention that focuses on those most in need of services, but recognizes that both RRH and HP are necessary strategies for addressing homelessness. Programs that were previously using Service-Linked Housing (SLH) to provide case management services for people in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) can also continue to use those funds for that purpose, up to the amount of funding that they previously received in SLH.
- 2) **Emergency Shelter.** Emergency Shelter covers activities that connect people with immediate access to overnight shelter in order to respond to a crisis. Funding provided for Emergency Shelter can be used both to pay for the operations of the shelter, such as rent and utilities, as well as services provided by the shelter, including case management. In some jurisdictions, some of the funding may be reserved for the use of either Women’s Only or Family shelters; this is noted in the funding sheet where applicable. **Please note that any shelter which accepts children is considered a “Family” shelter, and therefore must accept all families, regardless of the sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or age of any members of the family.** “Women and children shelters” are not eligible for funding through HSP.
- 3) **Outreach.** Outreach is for services that are provided to currently unsheltered individuals and families, including engagement and case management. This also covers the Homeless Resource Day events that are intended to connect people with available services, and activities designed to support the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count.
- 4) **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).** HMIS funding helps cover the costs of data collection through an HMIS database. Costs in this category are capped at \$5,000 per Continuum of Care. **All providers must be entering data into HMIS or, for victim services providers, a comparable database.**

Subgrantees

CoC Lead Agencies may subgrant part or their entire grant amounts to government agencies or nonprofit organizations to provide HSP-eligible services. Subgrantees must demonstrate collaboration with local

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homeless provider groups and local mainstream service providers. Subgrantees are expected to participate in Continuum of Care planning appropriate to the jurisdiction where their HSP activities are located.

CoCs that are awarded HSP funding are required to perform due diligence in regards to organizational capacity of subgrantees before making awards. Funding decisions for subgrantee agencies should be based on an objective process and review of the agency's programs, including the following factors:

1. Effectiveness in connecting clients who are most in need of services with shelter and permanent housing;
2. Past performance on federal- and state-administered grants;
3. Organizational structure, operating process, and capacity;
4. Participation in appropriate provider groups and local Continuum of Care meetings;
5. Organizational financial policy, controls, stability, and capacity, including the presence and accuracy of financial management systems, accounts, funds, reports, and other documentation.

CoCs will be required to perform financial and programmatic monitoring on subgrantees and ensure that programs are operating within the requirements and regulations of the program. On-site monitoring should be conducted at least once during the grant cycle.

Matching Funds

All CoCs must provide matching funds of at least 25% of the amount requested. This match requirement may be met at the community and/or grantee level, allowing communities to use programs or services funded by local and private resources as a match for this funding. The amount and source of any matching funds or services must be clearly stated in the match budget of the application submitted.

In order to meet the match requirement:

- 1) Matching contributions must be used to meet the HSP goals: reducing the number of people who become homeless, shortening the length of time people are homeless, and reducing the number of people who return to homelessness.
- 2) Matching funds must be received and expended within the HSP grant year contract period (July 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019).
- 3) Contributions cannot be used to meet multiple match requirements. This includes using match from a previous HSP grant - matching funds can only be counted in one year.
- 4) Matching contributions may be obtained from any local or private source. No federal sources may be used, **except** funding provided by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) for the purpose of meeting HSP goals. Additionally, no state sources may be used, **except** funding provided through the Emergency Assistance Program (EAP), formerly known as the Homelessness Prevention Program. For federal and state sources, the grantee must ensure the laws governing any funds used as matching contributions do not prohibit those funds from being used to match HSP funds. Additionally, if HSP funds are used to satisfy the matching requirements of another federal program, funding from that program may not be used to satisfy the matching requirements of HSP.

Matching funds may include the following:

- 1) Cash contributions. Cash expended for allowable costs of the grantee/sub-grantee.

- 2) Non-cash contributions. The value of any real property, equipment, goods or services contributed by the community / grantee towards meeting the HSP goals.

Administrative Funds

CoCs are eligible to apply for up to 7.5% of the grant request in administrative funding. **Administrative costs are those costs which are used for the purpose of managing the grant (e.g, preparing the application, financial reporting, program monitoring, training) and do not include program staff costs.** The Lead Agency may retain all funding requested for administrative costs, or may subgrant that funding to any agencies that are involved in carrying out those functions.

Data Collection

Applicants must enroll in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) (or a comparable database for victim services providers) of their Continuum of Care to be eligible for HSP funds. Grantees/subgrantees must be in compliance with all requirements set forth by HUD and by the local HMIS lead agency with the exception of victim services providers.

All activities funded under HSP must comply with HUD's standards on participation, data collection, and reporting under a local HMIS (including those victim service providers using a comparable database). All current or previously funded HS grantees/subgrantees are required to be in full compliance with HMIS implementation guidelines at the time of application. New HSP subgrantees must be in full compliance with HMIS implementation at the time a grant agreement is signed.

Victim service providers are not required to participate in the local HMIS due to confidentiality and safety concerns, but are required to establish a comparable database approved by the HMIS lead agency of the Continuum of Care. Victim services/domestic violence providers must document how they intend to ensure that HS reporting policies and procedures are in place and followed while ensuring the confidentiality of participants.

Applicants must also be participating in the Maryland State Homelessness Data Warehouse (MSHDW). The Data Warehouse uses information from HMIS to provide program reporting, and as such, all grantees are expected to be providing information that meets all data quality standards. Failure to do so can result in a reduction of funding awarded.

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APPLICATION OUTLINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

For lead agencies:

Maryland DHCD will only accept one application per Continuum of Care, with multiple subgrantees allowable. Each CoC should fill out all of the information required in the “CoC Application.” The CoC is responsible for compiling funding requests from selected subgrantees and coordinating to ensure that the total funding request matches the amount of funding available. The CoC will use the provided Excel funding sheet in order to ensure that requests align with the amount of funding available and all other requirements.

Funding is provided in two ways: **formula funding** and **competitive funding**. Formula funding includes funds that have been allocated to the Continuum of Care for the purpose of providing services for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Formula funding is **not** subject to the scoring process, and will be awarded to the Continuum of Care provided that all program requirements are met.

Competitive funding is based on the final application score, and **may or may not** be awarded to the Continuum of Care depending on its score. Each CoC application will receive **one score**, which will determine the percentage of competitive funding requested that will be awarded. The scoring process will include evaluating the CoC’s plan for addressing homelessness, its effectiveness in managing prior efforts, and the demonstrated need for funding. Subgrantees that are chosen as providers will factor into the final score, but **will not** receive a separate, individual score.

The funding sheet also tracks other funding requirements that must be met by the request. For example, a certain amount of funding must be allocated to providing rental assistance. In these situations, the requirements are listed on the funding sheet. **If the requirement has not been met, a red box will be visible on the sheet.** Before submitting, the CoC should ensure that there are no red boxes still appearing on the sheet (they should be either white or green). If the requirements are not met, the funding sheet will be returned, and the CoC will have to re-allocate funding to ensure compliance.

In addition, each CoC must certify that their subgrantees meet the HSP requirements, and that they will perform at least one monitoring and compliance visit to each subgrantee over the term of the grant period.

The CoC is responsible for submitting one application to Maryland DHCD, which includes the CoC Application and all Provider Profiles. The CoC retains all subgrantee attachments (listed on the signature page of the application) and **does not** submit them to Maryland DHCD. **If the Continuum of Care Lead Agency is a nonprofit organization, it should also include the following documents:**

1. Articles of Incorporation and Current By-Laws
2. 501(c)3 Verification
3. Certificate of Good Standing

If a Lead Agency is requesting direct funding for any of the program areas (Outreach, Shelter, Housing Stabilization Services, and HMIS), it should additionally submit a Provider Profile.

For providers:

Providers should complete the “Provider Profile” available from the Maryland DHCD website. Provider Profiles should be submitted to the CoC, which is responsible for coordinating requests and ensuring that the amount of funding requested is within the limits.

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EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

All Continuum of Care applications will be subject to two reviews:

- 1) A threshold review, ensuring that the application is complete and that all program requirements have been satisfied
- 2) A scoring review, evaluating both the Continuum of Care Application and Provider Profiles attached to determine the capacity of the CoC for implementing the goals of the Homelessness Solutions Program

Formula funding will be awarded to the Continuum of Care, provided that it passes the threshold review. **Competitive funding** will be awarded on the basis of the scoring review, with higher-performing CoCs receiving a higher percentage of the amount requested.

The Continuum of Care will receive **one score** for their entire application. The application, including Provider Profiles, may be assessed for:

- 1) Completeness and organization of the grant application;
- 2) Past performance in the programs included in HSP, including the ability to expend funds in a timely manner and meet all grant requirements;
- 3) Alignment with Departmental goals and priorities, including meeting the needs of homeless veterans and unaccompanied homeless youth;
- 4) Strength of program design and implementation strategy;
- 5) Extent to which programs result in increased housing stability and permanent housing outcomes for clients;
- 6) Consistency with local need, collaboration with local plans, and service delivery strategies;
- 7) Ability to submit data in compliance with HMIS quality standards;
- 8) Value of applicant's match contributions (cash and in-kind).

GENERAL INFORMATION

2018 Homelessness Solutions Program Application Timeline

April 2, 2018 – Application available for download on DHCD website

April 11, 2018 – Training session from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Maryland DHCD
7800 Harkins Rd.
Lanham, MD 20706

May 15, 2018 – Due date for application and all related materials

June 2018 – Notification of awards

July 1, 2018 – Grant period begins

Contact Information

For questions about the Homelessness Solutions Program, the application, or the application process, please contact homeless.grants@maryland.gov.